

BRITISH CENSORSHIP  
AND ENEMY PUBLICATIONS

BY

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By THEODORE WESLEY KOCH, *Chief, Order Division, Library of Congress*

IN the early part of 1917, while examining books detained in England, an exceptional opportunity was afforded me to study the workings of the British Censorship as it affected enemy publications. I came to feel that there were certain facts about the censorship that should be known by American librarians. I therefore sent to the Librarian of Congress a special report on the subject, prefaced with some historical facts which may not be known to American librarians and research workers. If Americans had gained earlier knowledge of what the British censors had to contend with and of the service these officials have rendered the Cause, they would doubtless have accepted with better grace the necessary interference with their mail.

With Dr. Putnam's consent this report is now made public. The officials of the Censorship kindly verified the statements here made.

## OBJECT OF THE CENSORSHIP

Two important memoranda were issued in May, 1915, as Parliamentary Papers—one on the Censorship, the other on the Press Bureau. Together they provide the official justification of the Censorship as it affects both the individual and the press. In the memorandum on the Censorship, this new branch of the government is described as one of several institutions designed with a threefold object: To prevent information of military value from reaching the enemy; to acquire similar information for the British government; and to check the dissemination of information useful to the enemy or prejudicial to the Allies. When the transmission of correspondence and the publication of news are consistent with the attainment of these objects there is little or no interference. Every endeavor is made to safeguard the legitimate interests, private and commercial, of British subjects and neutrals.

In the course of the present war it has become apparent that in the Censorship there lies ready to hand a weapon, the full value of which was perhaps not antici-

pated prior to the war. It can be used to restrict commercial and financial transactions intended for the benefit of enemy governments or persons residing in enemy countries.

The memorandum discusses the Censorship as it affects (1) private and commercial communications; and (2) the press. It states that the censorship of private and commercial communications is under the direction of a general officer who is responsible to the Army Council. The Censorship is organized in two sections: (1) the Cable Censorship under the control of the Chief Cable Censor, who is a senior officer of the general staff at the War Office, and (2) the Postal Censorship, controlled by the Chief Postal Censor. In addition to some 120 cables and wireless stations in various parts of the Empire, the chief cable censor controls in the United Kingdom messages sent over the cables of the private cable companies. Every 24 hours from 30,000 to 50,000 telegrams pass thru the hands of the censors in the United Kingdom. Exclusive of those in the official Press Bureau, about 180 censors are employed in the United Kingdom in the censorship of cables; elsewhere in the Empire about 400. In the United Kingdom, with few exceptions, they are retired navy and military officers.

The memorandum further states that the objects of the Postal Censorship are similar to those of the Cable Censorship. All mails that have to be censored are necessarily subject to some delay, but harmless letters, whether private or commercial, are not detained, even when coming from an enemy country or addressed to an enemy person. No letter, however, addressed to an enemy country can be transmitted unless its envelope is left open and is enclosed in a cover addressed to a neutral country. Letters in which any kind of code or secret writing is used are liable to be detained even if the message appears to be harmless and totally unconnected with the war. In the private branch more than a ton of mail matter is censored every week, ex-

clusive of parcels. Commercial correspondence with certain foreign countries is dealt with in the trade branch and amounts to nearly four tons every week.

#### LORD ROBERT CECIL'S STATEMENT

There is a good deal of confusion in the public mind between the press censorship, the cable censorship and the censorship of the mails. Even the latter is complicated, because different considerations apply to mails originating in or destined for, the United Kingdom; mails between European countries and the United States intended to pass through the United Kingdom; mails carried on neutral ships which voluntarily call at British ports; and letters carried on neutral ships which would not enter British jurisdiction without some form of compulsion. The distinction is emphasized in a letter addressed by Lord Robert Cecil, Minister of Blockade, to an American firm, and given to the press. The letter follows:

Foreign Office,  
June 23rd, 1916

Gentlemen:

I am directed by Lord Robert Cecil to thank you for your letter of May 27th, in which you take issue with a statement made by him to a correspondent of the *New York Times*. This statement was that great care is taken to forward mails between neutral countries taken from neutral ships for examination by the British censors as quickly as possible. You say that, during the last six or eight months, your correspondence with Holland has suffered great delay.

Lord Robert Cecil's statement was intended as an assurance that the postal censorship had been perfecting its organization, and that, from the time at which he spoke, Americans could be confident that their letters would suffer only slight delay owing to detention by the censors. He did not intend to exclude the possibility that delays had occurred in earlier days, when the British authorities first began to examine mails carried on neutral ships. But even if such delays did actually occur, it is by no means certain, and, in fact, it is in many cases unlikely, that those delays were due to the British censorship. Mails only began to be taken from neutral ships for censorship last December, and it is therefore quite clear that delays experienced by you from six to eight months ago cannot have been due to the censorship of these mails. As there has been a great deal of misunderstanding on this subject, I am to explain the following points:

The American mails censored in the United Kingdom must be divided into two classes,

each of which is dealt with by a special organization:

(1) *Terminal mails, i. e.,* mails originating in, or destined for, the United Kingdom. The censorship of these mails is one of the universally recognized rights of sovereignty, and it has been exercised since the beginning of the war, without any protest being made against it by neutral Governments.

(2) *Mails neither originating in, nor destined for, the United Kingdom.* These must be further subdivided into three groups:

(a) *Transit mails, i. e.,* mails between European countries and the United States intended by the office of despatch to pass through the United Kingdom—for example, mails sent from Rotterdam to this country for re-transmission from Liverpool to the United States. Such mails are forwarded by the British Post-Office, and enjoy the facilities afforded by it to British mails, and the right of censorship over them while in transit through British territory in time of war is generally admitted. This right, however, was not exerted at the beginning of this war, and censorship of these transit mails only came into force in April, 1915.

(b) Mails carried by neutral ships which normally call at a British port or enter British jurisdiction without any form of compulsion.

(c) Mails carried by neutral ships which would not enter British jurisdiction without some form of compulsion.

The first ship from the United States to Holland from which the mails were removed was the *Noorderdijk*. These mails were landed at Ramsgate on the 18th December, 1915, arrangements not having then been completed to remove them at Falmouth. The first ship from Holland to the United States from which the mails were removed was the *Noordam*, which entered the Downs on the 5th December. It is to classes (b) and (c) exclusively that the present discussions between this Government and other neutral Governments refer, while class (c) alone is covered by the Hague Convention.

Most of the annoyance caused in the United States by the action of His Majesty's Government seems to arise from a confusion between the above kinds of censorship. It is to the last two kinds only that Lord Robert Cecil's interview referred, and the British authorities are making every effort to perfect their organization so that the necessity of examining this class of mail may not involve long delays. But during the time that the censorship of these particular mails has been in force, many other factors have occurred



causing delay, quite independently of the action of the British Government. Sailings from Holland have been very irregular, owing to the mine fields sown by the Germans outside Rotterdam, and have, at times, been held up altogether, as, for instance, after the sinking of the *Tubantia*. As you are aware, the Dutch mail boats now proceed round the north of Scotland and go south, calling both at Kirkwall and at Falmouth before crossing the Atlantic, and this in itself causes considerable delay.

So far as the censorship is concerned, the delay in the case of mails from Holland to the United States will not be greater than between four and five days from the date when the mails are unloaded at Kirkwall to the date when they are handed by the censors to the Post-Office to be sent on. The delay caused to mails from the United States to Holland will not be longer than six days in all. The Post-Office will always forward the mail by the next boat to its destination, and whether delay occurs in this operation will solely depend upon the regularity of sailings. It will be seen that letters contained in the outward mails will sometimes, and those in the inward mails generally, reach their destination as early as, or earlier than, if left on board the Dutch ship.

When the urgent need of examining first-class mails, in order to intercept those postal packets which are admittedly liable to be treated as contraband, was first realized, it would have been possible at once to have brought the organization of the censorship to the level of efficiency it has since reached by collecting hurriedly a large enough number of examiners; but it was thought that infinitely more harm would be done to neutral correspondence by allowing their letters to be handled by persons engaged hastily, whose character and reliability had not been thoroughly tested, than by subjecting the letters at first to some slight delay. The necessary staff has now been carefully selected, and this delay eliminated.

In conclusion, Lord Robert Cecil would be much obliged if you would furnish him with more exact particulars of the letters which you complain of being delayed, giving, where possible, the date of the letter, the mail boat by which it was despatched, and, if registered, the registration number of the packet, in order that enquiry may be made into each case.

As there is so much misunderstanding on these points, and in the hope that the above explanation may do something to make the position clear, Lord Robert Cecil proposes to publish the text of this letter for general information.

#### DISCUSSION IN PARLIAMENT

Lord Grey of Fallodon stated in the House of Lords, January 6, 1916, that goods otherwise liable to seizure on board

neutral vessels do not, under international law, acquire immunity by the mere fact of being sent thru the post. The Allied governments are accordingly applying the same treatment to all such goods, however conveyed. The Allied governments do not at present interfere with postal correspondence found on neutral vessels on the high seas, but they exercise their undoubted rights to examine and censor such correspondence when ships carrying them enter their territory.

In the House of Commons, January 27, 1916, Mr. King asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he could make a statement concerning correspondence with the Dutch government about the intercepting of postal matter in transit on the sea; and whether any offer to submit the question to arbitration had been made. In answer to Mr. King's question, Lord Robert Cecil stated that the correspondence with the Scandinavian government would shortly be laid before Parliament. On February 21, 1916, Lord Robert Cecil stated that the publication of the correspondence with the Dutch government on the question of the interception of postal matter and other correspondence on the same subject was under consideration; but as the moment for publishing correspondence which was still in progress depended partly on arrangements with the other governments concerned, he could say nothing definite regarding the suggestion that the question should be submitted to arbitration. Consultations with the Allies were proceeding on the whole subject and he preferred to make no statement at that time.

On July 19, 1916, it was stated in Parliament that matter published in certain papers like the *Times*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Morning Post*, the *Labour Leader* and the *Tribunal* had been used by the enemy for propagandist purposes; that extracts from the *Daily Mail* were being translated into European and Asiatic languages, and that they were doing great damage to the cause of Great Britain. Attention, however, was called to the fact that none of these papers had ever said a word except for the prosecution of the war with the utmost vigor.

The question of the opening of letters addressed to members was discussed in

Parliament, December 18, 1916. Mr. Macpherson, the Liberal member for Ross and Cromarty, replying to a question put by Mr. Touche, said that all mails coming from France were liable to be submitted to the military censor. No discrimination is made between different members of the House. "It is a mistake to suppose," said Mr. Macpherson, "that the opening of a letter by the Censor constitutes any reflection either on the writer or the recipient. The object of the Censorship is to prevent the enemy from making use of indiscretions, to which experience shows the best intentioned persons are liable."

Just before the last Christmas holidays the War Office issued a reminder to the public that pictorial illustrations and photographs of all kinds, whether on post-cards, Christmas, New Year or birthday cards addressed to neutral or enemy countries, or enclosed in letters so addressed, and whether the illustration itself did or did not represent an object of interest to the enemy, would in the future be stopped by the military censor, except: (1) Family photographs addressed to British subjects interned in neutral and enemy countries; (2) illustrations in publications posted by firms holding a permit; and (3) illustrations and photographs enclosed in letters or other postal packets by firms who have occasion in the ordinary course of their trade to despatch such articles to their agents or customers in neutral countries.

#### THE CHECKING OF ENEMY COMMERCE

One of the principal functions of the Censorship is to act as a deterrent to all the undertakings of the enemy. That it has succeeded in its purpose is evidenced by the following extracts from intercepted letters published in the *Times*, December 12, 1916:

As you see the English are making so many disagreeables and seizing the post that our business is quite ruined. People do not dare to send money any more because they do not receive receipts from home.

As I see from your telegram sent a few days ago our lists have not arrived for three weeks now. . . . I think that if you sent the receipts in fifteen private envelopes I should perhaps receive them.

It is incredible how you have helped the

English Censor to establish the names of our agents and also the fact that G. and G. looked after our letters . . . you appear to have received no post from us since the beginning of March. Worse still is the fact that because of the Censorship you have not got our invoices or bills of lading. From this miserable condition in which the English sea-robbery has placed us there is no way out.

In conjunction with this we should like to say that according to our experience it seems now to be utterly impossible to ship any goods to foreign countries. Since the middle of April we received one single letter from one of our friends in the States in which he advises us that he instructed a banker in Berlin to remit us a certain amount. This remittance, however, we do not receive up to the present.

Whatever the English want they get, for the whole postal communication with Germany is completely upset, and we never know whether one can draw money or send money to the other side. It is very unpleasant for me also that I send 25,000 marks to Z., and if this remittance has not arrived then all the interest will be lost and many months will go by before I get over all the difficulties. . . . At this moment I have a consignment lying at L., but I have received no invoices and no bills of lading. Everything has again been stolen. These are the difficulties we have to fight against. I hope it will not be long before peace is signed.

In consequence of the condition of the postal service with your side, business is on a dead standstill.

From the above we can see how German commercial enterprise in foreign countries has been checked by cutting off both correspondence and remittances. Altho approximately half a million business letters passing between America and Europe were examined in the month of January, 1917, less than ten were found to belong to enemy firms. The attempt to use wireless telegraphy in place of the mails has met with obstacles. In addition to the high cost of sending messages by wireless there are other limitations to this kind of service as indicated in the following intercepted letters from enemy firms:

Your claim (says one writer) in regard to the transmission of your subscription may be attributed to the fact that you are ignorant of the circumstances that the cable connection with the Monarchy has been completely interrupted, and that therefore apart from wireless telegraphy, the only way to transfer orders was by letters. As regards communications by means of wireless telegraphy,



we would respectfully inform you that it is up to the present very unsatisfactory as a result of atmospheric disturbances. Long delays are unavoidable, and unfortunately messages are often distorted. Whenever possible we are transferring our orders by letter.

We have made (writes another) a number of attempts to get in touch with our bankers in Germany by wireless, but up to the present without success.

As soon as I found (says a third) that all my letters, so to speak, fell in the water, and did not reach their destination, I gave up writing any more. Similarly I did not receive a single letter from your side. Communication by wireless was also doubtful in the highest degree, and one often had no idea as to whether the message was destroyed by the Censor or whether it ever reached its destination or not. Taking it all round the present conditions are nothing less than infernal for a merchant who has been accustomed to a gradual and steady development of his business relations, and we can only hope that everything will some day turn out for the best.

#### IMPORTANCE OF THE CENSORSHIP

Possibly no phase of activity which sprang into being as a result of the war has been more misunderstood and at the same time more essential to the public good than the British War Office Censorship. From the first its workers have been immensely impressed with the responsibility of handling the correspondence of half the world. Respect for the rights of these correspondents has always been the first consideration and it is not too much to say that the majority of the readers employed by the Censorship bring to their task a purely academic attitude. It is a type of work especially uncongenial to the English character—foreign to its habits and traditions, tho an inevitable necessity in time of war. Its exhausting nature is almost beyond description. Some readers pass upon as many as 400 letters a day. The examination of books and other publications is of necessity a slower process.

Starting in London as a group of 30 workers, chiefly volunteers, the Censorship began its delicate and difficult task (in September, 1914) in a small basement room of the postoffice building. To-day the London branch alone occupies six floors of a large building—Strand House, in Carey street. Of its 3000 employees about 1700

are women, the remainder being men over military age, neutrals and wounded officers. Many of these employes are skilled linguists. In the Department of Uncommon Languages 157 languages are dealt with, including Gaelic, Welsh, Erse and five or six types of Yiddish. It is a matter of surprise and interest to know that so many persons are in the habit of corresponding by such unusual means.

The aim of the Censor is not, as many persons seem to believe, to see how many letters and publications may properly be detained, but to endeavor—as rapidly as possible—to send on everything that is found to contain no information of value to the enemy and nothing that could injure the cause of the Allies.

In the Philadelphia *Saturday Evening Post* of April 28 and May 5, 1917, Major Eric Fisher Wood published two excellent articles on the British Censorship. To this painstaking study we may refer anyone who wishes information on the organization of the Censorship as a whole. The purpose of the present paper is to deal more particularly with the Censorship as it affects the supply of publications of enemy origin to American librarians and scholars.

Detection of German propaganda and contraband of war in the mails is by no means the principal function of the Censorship. The London *Times*, December 12, 1916, observes that the Censorship may not unfairly be called the eyes of the blockade. Its principal work, it continues, lies in detecting and frustrating the innumerable and everchanging subterfuges contrived by the enemy with the connivance of neutral intermediaries for evading the blockade and carrying the sinews of war into Central Europe in the form either of goods or credit. The contrivance of such schemes by cable or by wireless is obviously impossible, and the examination of the mails has in countless cases proved an insuperable obstacle to their success.

#### GERMAN PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE

For what follows here I am indebted to Mr. Harry Melvill, librarian of the Censorship, who was most generous in granting interviews and in placing at my disposal many of his own interesting memoranda.

Mr. Melvill has gathered, arranged and carefully studied some 2000 specimens of various kinds of German propagandist literature. In his unique library are single copies of every book, pamphlet and periodical of enemy origin detained by the censor since September 1, 1914. This material Mr. Melvill has divided into groups: philosophical, religious, educational and pure propaganda. But he has done much more than this in divining the motive behind the publication itself.

*Before the war* German propagandist literature for both commercial and religious purposes was sent out on a scale that no other country had ever attempted. Many private individuals and establishments of various sorts scattered all over the world had been receiving gratis—for months, sometimes even for years—German literature in one form or another. Therefore, upon the outbreak of the war, it was not an occasion for special surprise to them to receive the new propagandist literature. And just as for purposes of distribution of ordinary propaganda the Germans used the channels of commerce ready to hand which had been so long and so freely at the service of their commercial propaganda, so there is no doubt in Mr. Melvill's mind that religious congregations of various phases of thought had kept in the closest touch with those of the same persuasion in neutral countries with a view to the distribution of the so-called religious propaganda.

In a memorandum prepared several months ago, Mr. Melvill divided the objects of the German propaganda into the following five classes:

- (1) To draw attention to the perfection of German methods of organization.
- (2) To give an exaggerated impression of the successes achieved by Germany in the war.
- (3) To neutralize as far as possible the bad effects produced by earlier excesses.
- (4) By more subtle touches to indicate the growth of dissension among the Allies and modifications in the attitude of neutrals towards the ultimate result of the war.
- (5) To misrepresent, as far as possible, thru the distortion of past expressions of opinion by writers of the Allied Nations, and by the employment of renegades, to deal with such topics as the treatment of subject races by the Allies.

The first two objects were mainly served by the German war literature in general and the remaining three by propagandist literature.

#### THE PROPAGANDIST PRESS

The earliest steps in regard to propaganda proper were taken by the Press. The *Ueberseedienst* [*Transocean*] from the first utilized its large pecuniary resources, not only to obtain publication of its garbled war telegrams, Germanophile articles and frequently falsified photographs in a large number of neutral papers, but also to acquire entire control of several already existing and to launch new ones of their own. Notable among the latter are the *Germania* at Buenos Aires, and papers of the same name at Bogota, Guayaquil and San Paulo; the *Heraldo Aleman* at San Salvador and the *Eco Aleman* at Guatemala. In China, in association with the Ostasiatischer Lloyd, they founded *The War* and a Chinese edition of the *Deutsche Zeitung für China* at Shanghai and the *Umschau* and *Rundschau* at Bangkok. The *Kontinentale Korrespondenz* (in German, English, Spanish and Portuguese) designed to furnish the neutral press with ready made copy, was also their creation. Moreover, they themselves published various polyglot periodicals and leaflets which found a host of imitators, and without doubt many of these made their way to place which books and pamphlets could not reach.

Furthermore, the *Presse-Abteilung zur Beeinflussung der Neutralen* served a similar purpose and was more or less responsible for the publication of the *War Chronicle* in German, English, French, Spanish and Dutch, and for *De Toekomst* published in Holland in Dutch. This organization was solely responsible for the creation of a propagandist comic paper printed in Spanish and entitled *La Guasa internacional*. The *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, with its "*Welt im Bild*" issued in twelve languages, and the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, with Spanish and Portuguese editions, were some of the first recruits, while the enrolment of the most disreputable of the latter belongs also to the initial stages of the campaign. There were also the British renegades and cosmopolitan hacks constituting the staff of the *Continental Times*, a sheet



purporting to be established for "Americans in Europe." The *Gazette des Ardennes*, tho belonging to a later period may be mentioned here, as the two are often classed together. Published in Charleville, it endeavors, by the insertion of lists of French prisoners in Germany, to obtain readers in the occupied portion of France, while the *Russki Vvestnik*, published in Berlin, was produced for distribution among Russian prisoners of war and in occupied parts of Poland.

The mobilization of the whole German press, explained Mr. Melvill, was equally complete. Every newspaper, which hitherto had published general or special news, published practically nothing but war news. As an instance to which this policy had been carried out he cited the fact that the *Criminal Zeitung* continues to appear under its old title, but has replaced records of crime by the exploits of soldiers; that art journals substituted "Kriegsjahr" for the year of publication, and that the *Münchener Medizinische Wochenschrift* has extended the hospitality of its columns to a prose paraphrase of the Hymn of Hate. While it was not suggested that the mass of scientific, technical and medical journals published in Germany ceased to devote themselves to subjects of special interest to their readers, Mr. Melvill was convinced that they also served a propagandist purpose by being distributed in isolated numbers to show that "Continuous research and industrial development under, and in spite of war conditions" is to be taken as Germany's somewhat ponderous reply to the British slogan: "Business as usual."

#### GERMAN USE OF ENEMY LITERATURE

That the Germans in general, and those engaged in the preparation of propaganda in particular, have a fund of knowledge of the literature of their enemies, is indisputable. There is very little that the Allies have said against themselves or each other which has not found its way to the shelves in the Wilhelmstrasse. Carlyle and Herbert Spencer, files of the *Times* and *Punch* are all requisitioned. The censorship librarian suggested that the "England von Innen" number of the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte* might bear as a sub-title, dear to Germans: "See what they say of them-

selves." The corresponding "Frankreich von Innen" number represents what the Germans say of the French, although it is to be noted that the Germans recently have represented the French as the most humane and cultivated of their enemies. In this utilization of Allied material, there is of course much that is mutilated and distorted, but there is a growing tendency to publish without comment wherever possible. A good instance of this policy (and at the same time a nice literary touch in propaganda) is afforded by *De Engelsche Tieranny*, a recent production of the Dutch Germanophile organ *De Toekomst*. Originally published at Amsterdam in 1781, it is now reprinted in the old type on an exact reproduction of the old paper and with the old engravings of supposed English pillage and oppression. The text is made up of conversations between a father and a son, recalling legendary grievances of the Dutch against the English and foreshadowing, almost verbatim, the comments on the British attitude toward small nations which are never out of the mouths of their enemies to-day.

As a pioneer of the propaganda proper in its relation to books and pamphlets, Mr. Melvill thinks that pride of place may be accorded to Houston Stewart Chamberlain, though his success as an evangelist has been in the inverse ratio to his prestige as a British-born apostle of German "Kultur."

Touching upon the endeavor to stimulate unrest in India, my informant said that the *Indische Gesellschaft*, hand in glove with the *Hindustan Ghadar* of San Francisco and the so-called Indian National Party, have produced a mass of literature, much of which claims to have been printed in England by presses which never existed. "British Rule in India condemned by the British themselves" is a patchwork of utterances by more or less distinguished Britishers, ranging from Lord Clive to Keir Hardie. It is prefaced by John Stuart Mill's pronouncement: "The Government of a people by itself has a meaning and a reality, but such a thing as government of one people by another does not and can not exist." Like the reprint of William Jennings Bryan's article with an almost similar

title, it has received the honor of translation into almost every known language and has found a sequel in "Why India is in revolt against British rule." This pamphlet purports to come from a mythical *Labor Press, Edinburgh*, but the very fact that the word *Labor* is spelled without a *u* shows it to be the product of an American press. Of the mass of other pamphlets in native languages, including Chinese, some are illustrated with photographs of the execution of Egyptian natives in connection with the Denshawî incident of some years ago.

#### INSTRUCTIONAL BOOKS

The Germans made special endeavors to distribute propaganda in instructional books because they rightly thought that such were allowed to pass. But Mr. Melvill believes that they never have realized the thoroughness with which the censoring is conducted and doubtless have no idea that any book is ever read from cover to cover. The use of every kind of publication in Germany for furthering its cause has, however, made this extreme caution necessary. Attention was called to the September, 1916, number of a serious magazine like the *Deutsche Rundschau* containing an article on the martyrdom of Roger Casement, bound for export in a cover dated September, 1902, in the hope that the censor would dismiss it as pre-war literature. The record of Lieut. Pluschow's double exploit in escaping from Sing Tau by aeroplane and from Donington Hall by a neutral boat was bound up in a school-boy's ink-stained copy of another Odyssey, that of Homer, in the belief that instructional books were subjected to only the most cursory examination. Not content with this, grammars in Turkish and Portuguese, detained in the mails, have been found to have all their examples and exercises of a definitely propagandist character. As an instance of the former, the *Türkische Lesestücke*, by Dr. Hans Stumm (Leipzig, 1916) contains a letter from a Turkish soldier to his mother, extolling the German comrade-in-arms and vilifying the French and English opposition in the Dardanelles. A grammar in the Portuguese language imparts a glowing glorification of German trade enterprises in Brazil.

But perhaps the best example of German inventiveness on record in the library of the Censorship is an attempt to smuggle to a prisoner of war political information between the covers of a pocket edition of a humorous publication entitled *Stratenfegels*—one of a series of the Reclam's Universal-Bibliothek. An exceedingly innocent looking little collection of verse and tales in low German, the "inventor" of it doubtless thought that no mere censor could or would take the trouble to read through its 90 pages in order to discover that although page 48 continues quite properly over to page 49 and for five lines thereon, the sixth line begins a letter to "Dear Brother." This letter, containing information about the situation in Germany, occupies four pages, each one thus cleverly placed at intervals throughout the book. All well known names are disguised in the supposition that the little volume would at most be glanced at only hastily and thus the eye would not be attracted to them. For example, Bethman-Holweg becomes for purposes of evasion Manbeth-Wegholl.

The manifesto of the French Catholic bishops gave the first impetus to the extensive contributions of so-called religious propaganda which have figured so largely in the campaign, *Deutsche Kultur, Katholizismus und Welt Krieg* leading the way. Protestant as well as Catholic weekly and monthly letters sprang into existence and have since been extensively circulated, wrapped up in war literature, or vice versa. *Jesus und der Krieg* and *Die Bibel als Kriegsbuch* are the titles of two brochures and Mr. Melvill regards it as scarcely an exaggeration to say that the Germans have pressed every phase of religious belief into their service. An exception must be made for Christian Science, he adds, which, though originating in America, is considered by the Germans a purely British possession.

#### THE CENSORSHIP LIBRARY

The collection of propaganda proper in the possession of the War Office Postal Censorship is most varied and comprehensive. As respects German war literature in general, as distinct from propaganda proper, it was impressed upon the writer

that the former has been distributed by the same recipients as the latter. Ample confirmation is afforded by intercepted letters of the fact that such literature is looked upon as propaganda by the Germans themselves. All German war publications must therefore be regarded by the Censorship as propagandist. The amount of it sent through the mails clearly proves that it is designed to help the German cause. The ever-increasing mass of war literature has been promoted by means of translation to take its place in the propagandist ranks. *Die Kriegsgefangenen in Deutschland*, one of the Montanus Bücher series—uniform with similar publications dealing with German history, naval and military efficiency, and profusely illustrated—was naturally of great interest to the Germans who were entertaining within their gates so many strangers of various types and nationalities. It has been translated into Spanish and all the languages of the Allies, and has been one of the publications most widely distributed for propaganda purposes. The innumerable books dealing with every phase of the campaign, East and West, undoubtedly play their part, if only by their titles in a publisher's catalog, as showing how many places German troops have vis-

ited, tho their stay in some cases has not been very prolonged. The wholesale idealization of their heroes, undertaken in the first flush of their success, has been industriously continued. Countless details about the lives of Hindenburg and Mackensen, Weddigen and Immelmann, personal narratives of Captain Koenig, and commanders of other ships and submarines, the frequency with which the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, the *Emden* and the *Dresden* figure on the backs of books, however trivial, all contribute to recall their exploits.

It is too early for the Censorship to estimate how completely the propagandist campaign has failed to justify the time, money and trouble lavished upon its prosecution. Even without Great Britain's interference with the mails, it would appear probable that no amount of variety could have prevented its very volume and insistence from defeating its own ends. As Mr. Melvill points out, its material has revealed a mine of knowledge, its methods are characterized by much German efficiency, and certain of its manipulations have developed much quite un-German suppleness, but as regards the Wilhelmstrasse's main objectives, it has missed the mark.



